5   (Khandha) Suta,vanta Sutta

The (Aggregates) Discourse on the Learned | **S 22.123**
Theme: Reflecting with wisdom on the aggregates leads to liberation
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2008, 2014

1 Introduction

    1.1 The Suta,vanta Sutta is structurally identical to **the Sīla,vanta Sutta** (S 22.122) except that where the former reads "the learned" (*sutavā*), the latter reads "the morally virtuous" (*sīlavā*). While in the former, the focus is on the wisdom faculty (*paññ'indriya*) [§3] as the key factor in bringing about stream-winning and so on, in the latter, the focus is on moral virtue, that is, the faith facfulty (*sadd'indriya*). Of course, in the final analysis, all the 5 faculties (faith, effort, mindfulness, samadhi, and wisdom) have to be harmonized.[1]

    1.2 Both the persons strong in the faith faculty and the one strong in the wisdom faculty are mentioned together in such discourses as **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1). After instructing how the 6 sense-faculties are to be regarded as being "impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise,"[2] the Buddha declares that whether we have faith in this (the impermanence of all the 6 sense-faculties), or we rely on wisdom to do so, we would attain streamwinning in this life itself, if not certainly at the moment of dying.[3]

    The practitioner "who firmly believes these truths [is convinced of these truths], is called a faith-follower (*saddhā'nusārī*). The one "who accepts these truths after pondering over them with some wisdom thus, is called a truth-follower (*dhammânusātī*). The Commentators call these individuals "**lesser streamwinners**" (*cūḷa sotāpanna*), that is, streamwinners-to-be.[4]

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(Khandha) Sutavanta Sutta
The (Aggregates) Discourse the Learned
S 22.123

    1 At one time, the venerable Sāriputta and the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita[5] were staying in the Deer Park near Isipatana, outside Benares.

    2 Then, in the evening, the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita, having emerged from solitude, approached the venerable Sāriputta, and said this to him:

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[1] On the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*), see **Pañc'indriya,** SD 10.4.

[2] *Aniccaṁ vipariṇāmiṁ aññathā,bhāvī.*

[3] S 25.1/3:225 @ SD 16.7.

[4] Buddhaghosa, in his **Visuddhi,magga** (Vism 19.27/605), and Buddhadatta, in his **Abhidhammâvatāra** (Abhdv 119). See SD 3.3 (6); SD 3.6 (4); SD 8.6 (14.2).

[5] Ce Ee Ke Se *mahā,koṭṭhito*; Be *mahā,koṭṭhiko.*

Reflecting on the 5 aggregates

3   "Avuso Sāriputta, what are the states that should be wisely attended to by a learned monk?"[6]

4   THE 11 CHARACTERISTICS. "A learned monk, Koṭṭhita, should wisely attend to **the 5 aggregates**
as being *impermanent*, as *suffering* [unsatisfactory], as a *disease*, as a *tumour*, as a *dart*, as a *calamity*, as an *affliction*, as *alien*, as *breaking up*, as *void*, as *non-self*.[7]

5   What are the five? They are, namely,

(1) the aggregate of form that is clung to,   *rūp'upādāna-k,khandha*
(2) the aggregate of feeling that is clung to,   *vedanupādānakkhandha*
(3) the aggregate of perception that is clung to,   *saññupādānakkhandha*
(4) the aggregate of formations that are clung to,   *saṅkhārupādānakkhandha*
(5) the aggregate of consciousness that is clung to.   *viññāṇupādānakkhandha*

6   A learned monk, avuso Koṭṭhita, should wisely attend to the 5 aggregates
as being impermanent, as suffering [unsatisfactory], as a disease, as a tumour, as a dart, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking up, as void, as non-self."

Streamwinning

7   But, avuso, when a learned monk, **[168]** wisely attending to these 5 aggregates
as being impermanent, as suffering [unsatisfactory], as a disease, as a tumour, as a dart, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking up, as void, as non-self,
it is possible that he would realize **the fruit of streamwinning** (*sotāpatti,phala*)."[8]

8   But, avuso Sāriputta, what are the states that should be wisely attended to by a monk who is a streamwinner?"

9   "Avuso Koṭṭhita, *these 5 aggregates should be wisely attended to* by a monk who is *a streamwinner, too.*

Once-returning

10 Avuso, when a monk who is a streamwinner wisely attends to these 5 aggregates
as being impermanent, as suffering [unsatisfactory], as a disease, as a tumour, as a dart, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking up, as void, as non-self,
it is possible that he would realize **the fruit of once-returning** (*sakadāgāmi,phala*)."

11 "But, avuso Sāriputta, what are the states that should be wisely attended to by a monk who is a once-returner?"

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[6] *Sutavatâvuso sāriputta bhikkhunā katame dhammā yoniso manasikātabbâti.* The learned monk here represents one who is strong in the wisdom faculty: on the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*), see SD 17.2a (9.2).

[7] *Sutavat'āvuso koṭṭhita bhikkhunā pañc'upādāna-k,khandhā aniccato dukkhato rogato gaṇḍato sallato aghato ābādhato parato palokato suññato anattato yoniso manasi kātabbā*. mutatis mutandis at **Sīla,vanta S** (S 22.122,4/-3:167), SD 47.4. The phrase *aniccato* etc is stock: see **Mahā Māluṅkya,putta S** (M 64,9/1:435), SD 21.10; **Dīgha,-nakha S** (M 74,9.2), SD 16.1; **(Nānā,karaṇa) Puggala S 2** (A 4.124/2:128 ×2), SD 23.8b; **(Nānā,karaṇa) Mettā S 2** (A 4.126/2:130 ×2), SD 33.10; **(Āsava-k,khaya) Jhāna S** (A 9.36/4:422, 423, 424, 426 ×2), SD 33.8. Cf **Khagga,visāṇa S** (Sn 51), where "a tumour" (*gaṇḍa*), "a misfortune" (*upaddava*), "an illness" (*roga*), "a dart" (*salla*) and "fear" (*bhaya*) are applied to sensual pleasures. See SD 47.4 (2.1.2).

[8] The whole para: *Ṭhānaṁ kho pan'etaṁ āvuso vijjati, yaṁ sīlavā bhikkhu ime pañc'upādāna-k,khandhe aniccato dukkhato rogato gaṇḍato sallato aghato ābādhato parato palokato suññato anattato yoniso manasi karonto sotāpatti,phalaṁ sacchikareyyâti.*

12   "Avuso Koṭṭhita, *these 5 aggregates should be wisely attended to* by a monk who is *a once-returner*, too.

Non-returning

13   Avuso, when a monk who is <u>a once-returner</u> wisely attends to these 5 aggregates
as being impermanent, as suffering [unsatisfactory], as a disease, as a tumour, as a dart, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking up, as void, as non-self,
it is possible that he would realize **the fruit of non-returning** (*anāgāmi,phala*)."
14   "But, avuso Sāriputta, what are the states that should be wisely attended to by a monk who is <u>a non-returner</u>?"
15   "Avuso Koṭṭhita, *these 5 aggregates should be wisely attended to* by a monk who is *a non-returner*, too.

Arhathood

16   Avuso, when a monk who is <u>a non-returner</u> wisely attends to these 5 aggregates
as being impermanent, as suffering [unsatisfactory], as a disease, as a tumour, as a dart, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking up, as void, as non-self,
it is possible that he would realize **the fruit of arhathood** (*arahatta,phala*)."
17   "But, avuso Sāriputta, what are the states that should be wisely attended to by a monk who is <u>an arhat</u>?"
18   "Avuso Koṭṭhita, <u>these 5 aggregates, too, should be wisely attended to</u> by a monk who is *an arhat*, too.
19   But, avuso, <u>the arhat</u> *has nothing further to be done* **[169]** or *to repeat what has been done*.[9]
20   However, these states that are cultivated, grown, bring about <u>happy dwelling</u> right here and now, and <u>mindfulness and clear comprehension</u>."[10]

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[9] *N'atthi khv-āvuso arahato uttari karaṇīyaṁ, katassa vā paticayo.* On *paṭicaya,* see SD 47.6 (2.2).
[10] *Api ca ime dhammā bhāvitā bahulī,katā diṭṭha,dhamma,sukha,vihārāya c'eva saṁvattanti sati,sampajaññāya c'ti.*